NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS DESCRIPTION

The Request for a Plan-Staff meets with the community to determine the following:
- What people and organizations are committed to helping prepare the plan,
- What will be the boundaries of the plan, and
- What is the community's reason for requesting the plan or what concerns is the plan expected to address.

When a Plan is Appropriate-When a community is organized to play a leadership role in the planning process and meets one or more of the following factors:
- There is no existing neighborhood plan,
- The existing neighborhood plan is out of date, or
- There is a change in the neighborhood that makes a significant impact on the surrounding community, such as a major new development.

THREE DISTINCT PHASES OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

1. **Community Building Phase-**Community group engages everyone who needs to be involved in developing the plan. This includes neighborhood leaders as well as a representative group of people and organizations from the area.

   The goal at this stage is not just to have a wide variety of stakeholders involved in planning, but for them to take ownership and responsibility for parts of the plan.

2. **Plan Preparation Phase**-Community leads the planning process with the assistance of Division of Planning staff and others, such as other City agencies or agencies such as the Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center.

   Typical parts of a neighborhood plan include:
   - A Description of Area - demographic information, history, existing land use, and building conditions
   - An Inventory of Assets and Liabilities - area strengths and weaknesses
   - Vision for the Neighborhood - the broad concepts of what the neighborhood should be in the future
   - Goals and Objectives - based on the area's vision and taking into account the strengths and aimed at improving weaknesses
   - Recommended Projects and Programs - further refinements of the goals and objectives. These are actionable items that include information about when they should be done and who should be responsible
   - Land Use and Zoning Plans - recommendations for future uses of properties in the area

   The planning process is tailored to the needs of the particular neighborhood. Topics often discussed at public meetings include, but are not limited to:

   - Quality of Life
   - Ecology
   - Housing and Neighborhoods
   - Industrial Development
   - Urban Design
   - Human Services
   - Historic Preservation
   - Public Safety
   - Transportation
   - Arts
   - Parks and Open Space
   - Job Creation
   - Education
   - Infrastructure
   - Commercial Development

Besides public meetings, other techniques used to gain citizen input include conducting surveys, conducting design workshops, and using focus groups.

3. **Implementation Phase**-Community begins to work towards accomplishing the actionable items listed in the plan.

    This includes meeting with agencies and organizations that can assist in implementation to determine when and how improvements can occur.

Planning Timeline-Typical planning process-from 6 months -1 year. Duration will vary dependent upon the nature of the issues, geographic size of the planning area and the level of neighborhood organization.

Planning Milestones-Completion of the parts of the plan listed in item two can be used as planning milestones to enable status reporting.

Plan Adoption-Plans are generally submitted to the Metropolitan Development Commission for adoption as components of the Marion County Comprehensive Plan.

Documents that Can Assist Neighborhoods-There are some recently prepared documents that can assist neighborhoods in understanding the groundwork necessary before engaging in the neighborhood planning process. They are:

- *Organizer's Workbook* - A guide to organizing and engaging neighborhoods.
- *Neighborhood Resource Guide* - Designed to help neighborhoods find resources and partners to help improve neighborhoods.
- *How to Create a Great Indy Neighborhood* - Describes the steps necessary to create a neighborhood quality of life plan.

All three documents are available at http://www.greatindyneighborhoods.org/.